THIRTY YEARS AFTER

A NEW ZEALANDER'S RELIGION

BY

H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D., F.S.A.

Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

Editor of *The Modern Churchman.*

Sometime Senior Scholar of the University of New Zealand.

This is a concise exposition of his religious convictions and ideals by a well-known Modernist scholar. It is popular in style, and practical in purpose.

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To

M. E. M.

a New Zealander,
A Mary in the House of God,
A Martha in her own,
I dedicate
this little book.

PREFATORY NOTE.

The seven addresses which comprise this little volume were delivered in various cathedrals and churches during my recent holiday in New Zealand. The addresses are popular in style and were spoken without manuscript, hence there are slight differences between their oral and published forms.

I have been moved to publish them, because some who heard them desired to possess them in a more permanent form, and also because I am anxious to remove the impression of earnest traditionalist Christians in the Dominion, that if a Christian teacher gladly trys to accept all the light which the Physical and Natural Sciences, Biblical Criticism, Comparative Religion, and other studies, contribute to the understanding of Christianity, he must of necessity be unfaithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"How very hard it is to be a Christian," sings one of our English poets, but that hardness is greatly increased for educated

young people by an obscurantist refusal on the part of official Christian teachers to understand the universe and human history as they are unveiled for the rising generation by our great scientists and historians. There is an Arab proverb: *The ink of science is more precious than the blood of martyrs.* Among St. Paul's bitterest opponents were some of whom he says: *They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.* Christian teachers need to-day both knowledge and zeal—the scientific spirit and the martyr spirit, which have on many occasions in the past co-operated for the benefit of mankind.

HENRY D. A. MAJOR.

Waimarama,
Remuera,
July, 1929.

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A REDUCED RELIGION

Sermon preached in St. Mark's Church, Remuera, N.Z., on June 30th, 1929.

A REDUCED RELIGION

And Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.—ST. MATTHEW, xxii., 37-40.

I.

A GREAT student of Christian Origins and Church History has pointed out that what is most remarkable about the Religion which Jesus Christ taught is not so much what He *includes* in it, as what He *excludes* from it. Nearly everything which was highly esteemed in contemporary religion, whether Jewish or Pagan, is absent from the religion which Jesus Christ taught. He was, in the eyes of the religious authorities of His Church and nation, a most irreligious man.

Contemporary religion valued highly, sacrifices and sacred places, ceremonial and ritual acts, sacred times and sacred personages, asceticism and incantations, formal acts

of divine worship, scrupulous literalism in the interpretation and observance of sacred laws and customs. It surrounded the religious life with a number of irrational and even immoral taboos.

What is a taboo?

A taboo is a convention or custom not based on reason, but is a product of pre-scientific religious fears. The life of the savage is largely governed by these taboos. They determine his conduct on all important occasions. A number of these taboos still influence the behaviour of civilised people, sometimes quite unconsciously. Gradually, in the light of a rising rational and moral standard, they are disappearing. Just as the early Christians were put to death as atheists ("the Atheists to the lions," was the cry of the pagan mob) because they did not believe in or recognise the Pagan gods, sacrifices, temples, and superstitions, so Jesus Christ was persecuted because of His disregard and stern condemnation of much that was regarded as intensely sacred in the Religion of Judaism. "For that," said Jesus, "which is highly esteemed among men is abominable in the sight of God."

Now this strangeness in the Religion of Jesus, that He excluded from His Religion

so much that was highly esteemed in contemporary religion, does not strike many of us as at all strange to-day when we look at contemporary Christianity, and that is because the Christian Church in the course of its history has managed to bring back into the Christian Religion almost all the things which Jesus Himself excluded from it when he preached the Glad Tidings of God's Love in Galilee.

I remember seeing in pre-War days in the *Salon* at Paris, a large picture with the title, "What God demands and what man has given." It was a striking picture and fell into two parts. One part consisted of groups of people engaged in labours of human love and service, relieving the miseries and needs of humanity. This part of the picture was lit up by a golden light which came from a cross very dimly visible in the background. The other part of the picture represented religious ceremonies and services, Church Councils and Courts, ecclesiastical buildings and orders, religious wars and persecutions. This part of the picture was also lit up, but by a lurid glare cast by a heretic being burnt at the stake. In the foreground was the figure of a much troubled priest tearing his clerical collar (*rabat*) from his neck.

I remember that the art critic in a French newspaper described this picture as "anti-clericalist." Such it certainly was, but it was positive as well as negative. If it shewed what Christ excluded from His religion, it also shewed what He included in it.

II.

Jesus reduced Religion to something very simple, very sincere, very sublime. He reduced it to a few fundamental spiritual truths, a few great principles of conduct—very easy to understand, very hard indeed to practise. I have said Jesus *reduced* Religion when He excluded all these things from it, but Jesus did not really make Religion smaller when He demanded for Religion not many things but much; there was no loss to Religion, but gain, when He demanded not quantity but quality; the inward rather than the outward; the spirit rather than the letter.

He reduced Religion in order to enlarge it; He reduced Religion in order to deepen it: He replaced taboos and fetiches by rational and moral principles: He moralized and spiritualized Religion; and in moralizing it and spiritualizing it, He universalized

it—He made His Religion the ideal Religion for every rational and moral human being. But when I say His Religion, I mean of course, not the traditionalist Religion of present-day Christendom, but the Religion of Jesus Christ as we have it in those undoubted portions of His teaching contained in the Gospels of the New Testament. Very soon that teaching was added to; very soon it was misinterpreted, misrepresented, and corrupted. Yes, even in some cases as we have it in our English New Testaments. To give but one instance: The disciples ask Jesus, why they could not cast the demon out of the epileptic lad. (Mk. ix.: 29.) Jesus answers: This kind can not come out except by prayer and fasting—so we have it in the Authorized Version, but in the Revised Version, "and fasting" is omitted. It was a very early addition to the words of Jesus—added in the interest of that kind of religion which He declined to include in His Gospel.

Now my text is an example of the methods of our Lord in dealing with Religion. All the precepts of the Law of Moses, and how many they were; and all the teachings of the Old Testament Prophets* are reduc-

*The Jews included in the Prophets the prophetical books and the pre-Exilic historical books but excluded the Book of Daniel as of later origin.

ed to two comprehensive commandments. The commandments themselves are not the words of Jesus. They are taken by Him from the Book of Deuteronomy, for the first great commandment, and from the Book of Leviticus, for the second. He widens the significance of the ancient words, as in the case of "neighbour," which meant, in the original context, "fellow-Israelite," but which means on the Lord's lips, as in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, your fellow-man. But whilst our Lord deepens and widens the meaning, He uses the old words. In other cases He uses a new form of words as in the Lord's Prayer,* which He substitutes in all its wonderful brevity and simplicity for the longer liturgical formularies of the Temple and Synagogue.

III.

For our Lord, man's religious duty falls into two great classes:

(1) *Love to God,* and (2) *Love to man.*

One might spend long in considering this summary, but I must confine myself to a few brief remarks about it.

*Although some of the phrases of the Lord's Prayer were apparently already in existence (see Taylor's "Sayings of the Jewish Fathers") the Prayer itself is an original composition.

Love is the keynote of these two commandments. Nowadays many feel repelled by the word love. A great English poet wrote:—

> *"One word is too often profaned*
> *For me to profane it."*

The word love has become debased and vulgarized. Nevertheless in the Christian Religion there can be no substitute for it. "God is Love" is the one supreme article of the Christian Faith. "Thou shalt love," is the one supreme duty of the Christian life. Love lies at the heart of the Christian Theology and that theology can only be understood and explained in the light of love. Love is the essence of the Christian moral ideal: every duty can be inspired by love and expressed in terms of love. The reason for this is that God, so Jesus taught, is Himself essentially love, and the duty of every child of God is to love his Heavenly Father and to love his brother man. As St. John writes: "Everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God: he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Professor Henry Drummond some years ago wrote a very beautiful little book on Christian love and called it: *The Greatest Thing in the*

World." It is that, but according to the Christian Faith it is more: it is the greatest thing in the Universe—the most real, the most central, the most permanent, the most vital, the most divine.

Many complain that the command to love is so vague. It may mean almost anything or nothing—an unholy passion or a feeble sentiment. They would prefer to have substituted for "Thou shalt love," "Thou shalt do so and so." In short, take us back from the Gospel and place us under the Law.

Others object to the command "Thou shalt love," by saying it is absurd to *command* anyone to love. We love naturally, because we are moved to love; we cannot love under compulsion or at command.

Now it is important to realise that in the teaching of Jesus the word love has a definite meaning. It does not mean a fanatical, or unholy, or immoral passion, and equally it does not mean a feeble sentimentality. It is not emotional and passionate; it is essentially reasonable and moral, and it expresses itself in a certain type of conduct and character.

Our English word *love* covers many meanings, but in Greek there are three words for love: (1) means the love of pas-

sion, desire, lust; (2) means the love of friendship, affection, mutual attraction, based it may be on similar tastes; (3) means the love which is essentially moral and rational. It is this word which is always used in the Greek Testament of the love of God to man, and also of the love which man should have to God. This is the word used in my text.

The kind of love which is meant in our Lord's summary is also clearly disclosed by the words to which it is united: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind." With us the phrase "all thy heart" means all thy emotional power. With the Israelites the kidneys or reins were the organ of emotion, the heart was the organ of conscience, the moral sense. "Pure in heart" in the Beatitude means pure in conscience. To love with all the soul is to love with all the force of our personality—not feebly or languidly. To love with the mind is to love rationally, with our intelligence, not as stupid, ignorant blockheads who have no clear idea of the Divine Nature. The love prescribed demands our noblest moral feeling, our very highest intelligence, the full vigour of our personality. It does not permit an immoral,

unintelligent, easy-going sentimentalism. This love may properly be *commanded*, for it demands only that which a reasonable and moral being should give. It requires of us not love as an *emotion*, but love as a *motive for action*, and thus may be commanded. There are some who, when they abandon ecclesiastical Christianity, swing to the other extreme and substitute for it humanitarianism, and regard that as "the simple religion of Jesus." There they are wrong.

Thou shalt love the Eternal Goodness, the Eternal Righteousness, the Eternal Truth, the Eternal Wisdom, the Eternal Beauty, the Eternal Love, because just in so far as you are moral and rational, just in so far as you would increase in morality and rationality, you must do so. You have, in fact, no option, if you reflect about it. And moreover, if you give this love in the case of God, you will necessarily do it in the case of man, the child of the Divine Love.

But whilst you think of human Love to God as something essentially reasonable and moral, do not think of it as dull and dreary. An Oxford undergraduate confessed that he was interested in religion, but he added, "I am not interested in God the Father." I take it that he had been taught in childhood

a very commonplace view of God—a grave, good old man dwelling in the sky, and that he had never grown out of that view. But think of what God was to a devout astronomer like Kepler, to a great scientist like Kelvin; think of what God was to Wordsworth as he saw Him unveiled in the beauty of Nature; think of what God was to St. Augustine who beheld Him unveiled in the marvel of human personality; think of what God was to St. Paul who saw Him unveiled in the love of Jesus Christ. There should be a poetry, a splendour, a purity, an intensity, an ever-extending range and insight in our love to God, which grows with our own growing experience and personality.

This will make clear why in the teaching of Jesus the command: "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God," is the first and great commandment. The Christian Religion is not simply philanthropy and humanitarianism, although philanthropy and humanitarianism are essential elements in that religion. Love of man, unless it be inspired and transfused by the love of God, may easily sink into an easy-going utilitarianism, a debasing philanthropy, a sentimental humanitarianism, which seems to witness without a qualm the moral corruption and mental degrada-

tion of those whose bodily needs it relieves. As, for instance, when the Roman rulers provided bread and circuses for the Roman populace, or as is seen in the love of a foolish mother devoted to spoiling her child.

For what, practically understood, is love to man? It is shewn in giving to each, so far as our means and his needs allow, that which is best for him. And to decide and give what is best, demands a very high degree of intelligence and morality on the part of the giver. And this decision as to what is best, must be dependent upon our conception of the Universe and of the true nature of man. That is why love to man is not enough.

Love to God is needful to direct and inspire our love to man and to make that love in the truest sense a blessing to those towards whom it is directed. Love to man, to be of supreme value, needs to be in the highest degree moral and reasonable: it needs to be inspired by the highest motives, directed by the keenest intelligence, and it is love to God which can so purge and ennoble love to man.

The test for us and for our fellow-men of the reality of our love of the Father, eternal, immortal, invisible, is the sincerity, nobility, and intelligence of the service

and sacrifice which each of us is giving to the welfare of mankind.

As I think of the Two Great Commandments of Jesus Christ, certain insistent questions seem to demand an answer.

What would have been the history of the Christian Religion? What would have been the quality of its service to mankind? What would have been the character of our civilisation to-day? if the Christian Church had been content to limit its ideal of Christian Faith and Duty to the love of God and love of man and to concentrate on them? Is it not possible that the Christian Church, abandoning all its vast accumulation of ecclesiastical and dogmatic *impedimenta*, may yet reduce its religion to our Lord's two great commandments?

It is possible, but it will demand much courage from our leaders to tell mankind that many of those things, about which Christians have disputed and fought, and for which they have striven and suffered, are no essential part of Christ's Religion; indeed, not even non-essential, but detrimental.

It is the necessity for this simplification of our religion which has becoming a growing conviction with me during the thirty

years which have elapsed since I last preached in this pulpit.*

*The Church in which the preacher received Deacon's Orders and Priest's Orders, and in which he ministered as curate for four years from 1895 to 1899.

THE RE-CREATION OF THE CHURCH

A Sermon preached in St. Peter's Cathedral, Hamilton, on 1st July, 1929, before the Synod of the Waikato Diocese.

THE RE-CREATION OF THE CHURCH

"The Church which is His Body."

—EPHESIANS i.: 22, 23.

"YES," said a young man to me recently, "I believe in the Gospel, that is in the principles of Jesus Christ, but I do not believe in the Church." As I pressed him, he developed his objection somewhat as follows: The Gospel is divine, it was given to mankind by Jesus Christ; the Church is a human institution; it was the product of the organising ability of St. Paul. Moreover, when one studies the history of the Church, the impression of its very human and non-Christian character is increased. The Church, while it claims to be the friend, has oftentimes been the enemy, of the Gospel: it has oftentimes corrupted the Gospel: it has oftentimes misrepresented the Gospel: instead of saying, "This is the Gospel; this is the message of Jesus Christ," it has put itself and its teachings in the place of Jesus and His Gospel and has proclaimed to mankind: "The Church says; the Church teaches; the

Church believes; the Church orders, commands, and decrees so and so." No, the Church is not only a deceiver: it is a usurper and a tyrant, like all institutions, created to defend and propagate certain ideals and ideas, it strangles them and ends by devoting all its energies and resources to defending and maintaining itself. "I am the State. (*L'etat c'est moi*)," said the French King who exalted the Monarchy at the expense of the nation. "I am the sole Saviour of men," says the Church, "and unless you obey me and are loyal to me, you cannot be saved." Surely this is Anti-Christ.

In considering these general charges against the Church, we need first of all to be clear on a number of points.

I.—Did Jesus Christ Found the Church?

There would have been no Christian Church* if it had not been for Jesus Christ.

*In the Gospels the word Church (ecclesia) only occurs in two passages, both in St. Matthew's Gospel and there are very good reasons for rejecting both passages as not actual sayings of Jesus Christ. (1) Mt. xvi., 17—19 is absent from the parallel account in St. Mark (viii. 29—30) which is our oldest Gospel. (2) Mt. xviii. 17, "Tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican," are strange words to come from the lips of "the Friend of Publicans and Sinners." Surely they reflect the spirit of primitive Jewish Christian Pharisaism.

It was not His teaching alone which brought the Church into existence, it was also His actions. When He gathered disciples around Him, the first step in creating the Church was taken: when He selected twelve Apostles to be with Him and to take part in the mission of evangelising the Jews, the second step was taken.†

After His crucifixion many other stages in the creation of the Church followed, particularly under the leadership of that great ecclesiastical statesman, St. Paul, who organized the Church of the vast Roman Empire.

I think the right answer to the question: Did Jesus Christ *found* the Church, or did St. Paul? is this: Jesus Christ brought the Church into existence by his Gospel, His deeds, His Spirit, but St. Paul *organized* the Church, and many other men have organized it since St. Paul's day, and also some of them have seriously disorganized it.

II.

But as practical men, we cannot stop there. When we look round the world to-day, we

†I make no reference to the Mission of the Seventy in St. Luke which some of our higher critics regard as of doubtful historicity.

see a number of Christian Churches and the question is often asked, which of all these Churches is *the* Church, the *true* Church of Jesus Christ?

We all know that the Roman Catholic Church makes this proud claim for itself; we know that it is also made by the smallest and newest of Protestant sects, but the right answer to the question: Which of all these is the true Church? is *All and None.* All the Christian Churches have a historic connection with the Christian Church of the New Testament: all can trace back their succession to it. It may not be, indeed it is not, in most cases, the possession of an unbroken episcopal ministry and government going back to primitive times, but it is an historic succession of the Church itself. In that sense every Christian Church can claim Christ as its Founder. Perhaps some will reply: Surely not if the so-called Church be a schismatic body? Perhaps not, but remember that it is not that newer body of Christians which is necessarily schismatic, but *that body is schismatic which caused the separation,** and, may I add? *that body also which maintains it.*

*This point was made by "the ever-memorable Mr. Hales" in his treatise on Schism in his "Golden Remains."

Now when you take that view of schism —the rending of the Body of Christ—it is very hard to say to-day which bodies are schismatic and which are not. All call Jesus Christ Lord; all claim Him as their Head. What, however, is plain is that not one of them all can rightly claim to be *the* Church, the *true* Church of Jesus Christ, to the exclusion of all the rest.

Archbishop William Temple said on one occasion: "I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, but greatly regret that it does not exist."

There is no One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church in existence in the world to-day; there is merely a congeries of more or less Christian or unChristian sects. Nevertheless, we have in the New Testament, in St. Paul's *Epistle to the Ephesians*, a wonderful presentation of the Church of Christ in ideal—not as many, but as one—the Bride of Christ: the Body of Christ. Christ, St. Paul teaches, is in the spiritual sphere and the Church is Christ's body on earth through which He carries on His great work of human salvation. The Church of which He is the Head is endowed with His Gospel and with His Spirit; in short, with all those moral and spiritual gifts and graces

which it needs in its mission to mankind. And how may we describe that mission?

The Church's mission is to advance the Kingdom of God on earth, until God's Will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Or we may describe the Church's mission as the salvation of mankind—Salvation means for us to-day, not deliverance from future torment in Gehenna, but the promotion of the moral and spiritual health of humanity by its deliverance from every form of evil.

Or we may describe the Church's mission as the uniting of all mankind in Christ: the breaking down of all those dividing walls of falsehood, prejudice, suspicion, envy, hatred, pride, malice, ignorance, greed, injustice, which promote strife and contention in the world. This is the aspect of the Church's mission which is especially brought into prominence in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*. The motto of the Church in *Ephesians* is "all one in Christ": not merely all one, but all one on the highest moral and spiritual level —one in Christ's fellowship, one under His leadership.

Alas! how remote is the actual from the ideal: that which should be the great unifying agent in human society has too often

proved itself to be the cause of divisions, hatreds, prejudices, contentions; that which should have been the chief agent in advancing God's Kingdom on earth has, in certain notable instances, withstood that advance; that which should have been the great deliverer from vice and evil, has itself on occasions presented a pitiable picture of vicious and degraded conditions.

Is then the Church a needless or indeed harmful adjunct to the Gospel of Christ? We all know that the Church is expensive and makes demands on our time and energy.

Is it a mistake?

Now much as the Church falls short of its ideal, it is a practical necessity for the Christian Religion, and, I believe also, a practical necessity for the world. It is true that Cardinal Newman and many other Christian men have felt that God and a man's soul are the two great realities in the Universe, and that the essence of religion is the communion of the soul with God. But if this individualist view of religion had prevailed, it would have meant the death of Christianity. Had there been no Church, the Gospel would almost certainly have died out of human memory. It was the Church which valued, remembered, record-

ed, preserved and proclaimed, the Gospel, even though it did not live up to it as it should have done. It is the Church which has made Christ known to the world, even though the Church may in some ways have misrepresented Him. Christian ideals, Christian standards, have been kept alive and propagated now for near two thousand years; some five hundred millions to-day are nominally Christian; that is due to the work of the Christian Church. Had there been no Church, I doubt if the Gospel of Jesus would have been known to anyone to-day. If you swept the Christian Church out of existence, you would enormously reduce in three generations, the influence of Christian principles in the world. It seems to me that those who take a far-sighted view of human needs and human welfare and happiness, must recognise the need for the Christian Church. The Church meets certain essential needs in the life of the individual, and the life of the community. It helps the individual to find his right relation to the Universe: it gives him his true sense of values: it shows him his own significance and duty. The Church treasures and preserves and propagates for mankind those ideals and values which are essential to social pro-

gress: the world's purest hopes, its deepest yearnings, the good it comprehends not, the most precious secrets of its experience expressed in symbols and sacraments. If we look at life in a large and deep way; if we view the Church with reference rather to what it might do than with reference to what it has done so far, we can see the great need for the Church as the spiritual home of humanity. It is human need which demands the Christian Church: it is love to mankind which compels us to support it. We are really in this position: *We cannot do without the Christian Church; and yet we cannot do with the Christian Church as it is.*

Our task is clear. It is not to abolish the Church; it is not to desert the Church; it is to re-create the Church: to bring into being a Church of Christ which shall be worthy of its Lord and His Gospel, and shall accomplish for humanity that which He lived and died to achieve.

And how should we set about this task?

(1) We must begin by getting clear as to what the Church exists for. We must begin by trying to estimate the Church in the light of its purpose as the Body of Christ, the organ of His Spirit and influence in the world. Such a Church will not be judged by

numerical standards, or financial standards, or liturgical standards, or doctrinal standards, or organization standards; the sole and supreme standard will be this: is it advancing the Kingdom of God? Is it permeating human life with Christ's Spirit and principles? Is it helping to unite mankind in the pursuit of whatsoever things are just, pure, noble, lovely, and of good report? "By their *works* ye shall know them," said Christ. "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the Will of my Father which is in heaven." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" said St. Paul. These are the standards and ideals of the Church and its mission, which we must get clearly and strongly into our minds. These—its works and its spirit—are the *tests* of its truth and vitality.

(2) Our next step will be this: To get a clear idea of the relation of the Church to the Gospel, and the relation of Church organization, rites, machinery, to the Church itself. Some imply that the Church has authority over the Gospel because it is older than the Gospel and wrote the Gospel. But this is a mistaken argument. The Gospel is

the authoritative teaching of the Church's Founder and Head. Hence the Church is subordinate to the Gospel: it exists to proclaim it; teach it; obey it. The Church's message is not: "The Church says," but "Thus saith the Lord; these are the principles of the Gospel." With Church machinery, organization, rites, institutions, the case is different. All Church machinery is a means to an end. The machinery exists to accomplish certain things: if it is not accomplishing the thing it was intended to accomplish, if this be the fault of the machinery, the machinery should be scrapped and fresh machinery created, or it should not be scrapped but modified and adapted. Sometimes the machinery is all right; but it is being worked badly by unskilled and incompetent operators. They are ignorant, or injudicious, or lazy, or impatient. Then they must be inspired to do better, or in the last resort be replaced.

(3) There are two things particularly which should ever be before the eyes and in the hearts of members of the Church.

(a) The first is Christ's Charter to His Church. It is too often ignored or forgotten. It runs thus, and you have it in the Sermon on the Mount:—

"Ye are the salt of the earth."

"Ye are the light of the world."—(*St. Matthew V.*: 13-14.)

You see here the Church's Charter is no exclusive affair: the Church existing merely for itself: to save its own members. That exclusive and perverted conception of the Church is not Christ's conception of it. Christ's Charter to the Church exhibits the Church in relation to the world: it declares the function which the Church exists to discharge for the world. The Church is to be the *salt of the world*: that influence and element in human society which preserves it from putrefaction and corruption; it is also to be the *light of the world*: that influence which is against every form of deception and falsehood—the darkness of ignorance and the blackness of vice which shrink from the clear light of righteousness and truth. *Salt and light* are the characteristics of the Church in the world—and how the world needs *salt* and *light*. These, too, are the characteristics of every member of the Church in his particular circle.

(b) The second thing that should ever be before the eyes and in the hearts of members of the Church, is the tremendous stress

which the Christian Religion lays upon the virtues of love, humility, forbearance, meekness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, the ability to endure wrong in silence, not giving "railing for railing," but is "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." Whether it be the teaching of the Lord, or St. Peter, or St. Paul, or St. John, or St. James, you find this in each. The German philosopher, Nietzsche, attacked it as that which made the Christian Religion a hateful and demoralizing thing—it could never be the religion of the hero. He called this element in Christian teaching "the slave morality" of the Christian Religion. Slaves might admire such virtues, slaves might cultivate them, not the manly, not the free, not the noble. I may not here offer a criticism of Nietzsche's moral teaching. A wise man, many years before Christ said: "Greater is he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city," and the world would have been both a happier and a better place if it had taken this view.

But what I wish to stress here is that these virtues of gentleness, humility, patience, are to be valued not so much as *personal* virtues, but as *social* virtues. If the members of a corporation or society possess and cultivate

these virtues, it makes for corporate strength. These social virtues bind the body together; they preserve its unity; they prevent divisions and dissensions; they in their perfection produce a society in which self is forgotten, but the aim of the society, its work, its welfare, are in the heart of each and all. No personal ambition, no self-assertion, no lordship, no rivalry, no malice, no slander, no pride, no self-conceit—all those vices which divide a society, which split it into factions have a place in the ideal Church of Christ.

There is, if I may rightly utter it, one more liberating word.

When you think of the Church of Christ: when you are considering its ideals, its methods, its welfare, its organization, its doctrine, and so on, strive to put out of your minds all those ecclesiastical labels with which Church controversy abounds. Many of these labels were the slogans of ancient fights in the dark. "Happy," it has been said, "is the nation without a history." Happy, too, is the churchman who can forget much of the Church's past. The great scholar, Bishop Lightfoot, found in Church History the cordial for drooping spirits. There are, however, many upon whom it has a very de-

pressing effect. The past can burden as well as stimulate: it can paralyze as well as inspire. St. Paul's motto, "Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto the things that are before," is the best motto for every practical churchman. In formulating, advocating, supporting a church policy think only of the world's needs and the Church's purpose. Think only of Christ's Charter for His Church: see the Church as St. Paul presents it in his great *Epistle to the Ephesians;* pray that the Church may be enabled to do the great task to which it is called, and then as practical men, as wise men, turn your backs on the past with its disputes and defects, and go forward into the future under the sole guidance of the Spirit of Christ.

"O pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And plenteousness within thy palaces.
For my brethren and companions' sakes
I will wish thee prosperity:
Yea, because of the House of the Lord our God
I will seek to do thee good."

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

Sermon preached in
Merivale Parish Church, N.Z.,
on
the Sunday after Ascension Day,
1929.

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

—ROMANS viii., 18.

"I RECKON" is a frequent Pauline phrase. When St. Paul says "I reckon" he is like an American saying "I guess"; he is expressing a conviction. The conviction in this case is essentially optimistic. It would make a great deal of difference to us, if we could feel St. Paul's conviction about suffering, especially when we are called upon to suffer and also to witness the sufferings of others. Bishop Jeremy Taylor wrote to the noble person to whom he dedicated *Holy Dying*. "The lessons of how to die well are best learnt by men in health." So is it with suffering. As all of us are called upon to suffer, we ought to have some clear ideas about it. Most of us have not. I remember one with whom I associated as a lad. When troubles befell, he used to remark: "There

are worse things at sea," and when you protested that that was no great comfort, he would add: "You will get over it before you are twice married." This does not carry us very far, though quite sound as far as it goes, for it certainly helps us to bear our suffering to reflect that the sufferings of others are greater than ours, and that our own sufferings are by no means interminable. But after all, this is a very individualistic view of the matter, and no thinking person can be satisfied with it.

Besides the sufferings which have tortured man's body, the problem of suffering has vexed man's soul for many ages. In reading the Bible, it is of value to note the very important part that the problem of suffering plays in it, and the attempts made to solve it.

I.

The earliest solution of the problem was that all suffering is due to sin. It was not always the sin of the sufferer, but usually it was. We see in the early Creation Narrative in *Genesis iii.* that man's sufferings in agriculture, woman's sufferings in childbirth, even the sufferings of the serpent, for dust is an unpleasant diet, are due to sin. The effects of a sin caused suffering not only

to the individual sinner, but to his descendants as well. Hence we have the Israelite proverb: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

This view that all suffering is due to sin is found in the New Testament also. The Jews in St. John's Gospel ask our Lord: "Did this man sin or his parents that he was born blind?" And Jesus answers: "Neither did this man sin nor his parents, that he was born blind." So, too, in the case of those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell. Jesus asks: "Suppose ye that they were sinners above all the dwellers in Jerusalem, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay."

So, too, in the case of the paralytic lad at Capernaum. Jesus at the outset announces the forgiveness of his sins, which the sufferer believed had caused his paralysis. Then He bids him take up his bed and walk. Our Lord sees no necessary connection between suffering and sin. Certainly sin causes suffering—much suffering to oneself and to others. Therein the ancient Israelite teachers were right. But there is much suffering which is not due to sin. This fact they failed to recognize.

II.

It is in the Book of Job, that great dramatic poem, that we have a later Israelite protest against the traditional doctrine that all suffering is due to sin. We see in Job a perfectly righteous man who suffers unexampled disasters. His religious and respectable friends are all convinced that this is due to Job's sins, particularly to his secret sins. Job protests his innocence, but in vain. Though he complains of his sufferings, yet he holds fast to his faith in God. He refuses to curse God and die. "When I am tried," he exclaims, "I shall come forth as gold."

The Book of Job proclaims another cause of suffering besides sin. Suffering is sent to prove the righteous. Satan, by divine permission, trys Job with manifold sufferings, in order to test whether he is truly righteous, and in so doing develops Job's virtue. Here, then, we have a second purpose in suffering: it serves as a probation—a means both of testing and of developing virtue:

> *"Sweet are the uses of adversity,*
> *Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,*
> *Bears yet a precious jewel in its head."*

These "sweet uses of adversity," which Shakespeare recognizes, are evident to all

students of human nature. Sympathy, patience, gentleness, courage, wisdom, and many other virtues are developed by suffering. Dean Inge tells in poignant words of the wonderful moral and spiritual development in his little daughter, whose early death he relates in his book entitled *Personal Religion.* But besides these "sweet uses," there are also "bitter fruits" of suffering. Hardness, hatred, doubt, despair, cowardice, dissipation—due some will say to the wrong way in which suffering has been borne. Possibly so.

III.

Yet after we have accounted for the suffering due to sin; the ignorant, weak, and wilful breaking of the laws of Nature, Man, and Conscience: after also we have accounted for that suffering which may have a probationary value in the positive development of virtue, there is much suffering in the world left unaccounted for. This is recognized in the Scriptures, and so we have a third solution put forward. It appears first in the second part of Isaiah (XL.—LXVI.) written after the Jews were led as captives into Babylon. We call this vicarious suffering. The suffering of the Servant of the

Lord, as we have it described in *Isaiah liii.*, is of this kind.

> *Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*"

The supreme example of this vicarious suffering is seen in Jesus Christ, but the world is full of it, for, as a great Father of the Church said: "There are many Christs in the world." Every mother suffers for her children: every great cause demands its martyrs: every life of service has in it a measure of vicarious suffering. Here the teaching of Scripture about suffering concludes. Let me sum it up.

Suffering, according to Scripture, is of three kinds: (1) Suffering for sin; (2) Suffering for the testing and development of character; (3) vicarious suffering willingly borne for the sake of others.

This does not explain all suffering; there is, for instance, the suffering of the animal world; there are also the sufferings of those human beings whose sufferings do not ap-

pear to come in the three classes of suffering treated in Scripture.

IV.

But the unveiling of truth did not stop with the close of Scripture. Modern scientific thought has made very important contributions to the solution of the problem of suffering. The great Bishop Butler, who was much influenced by the scientific thought of the eighteenth century, points out that many suffer as the result of the operation of what he calls "general laws." These laws are universal in their sway: they admit of no exceptions. This reign of law does not take the place of God: law is God's vice-regent and He governs through it. Some criticize this method of government, which in the case of Nature makes no distinction between good and bad. In an earthquake good and bad men perish together. In a battle moral heroes may fall and criminals survive. Those who criticize God's government by the operation of these general laws ought to recognize that the benefits of this method are much greater than its disadvantages. It is this uniformity of Nature which has permitted the triumphs of modern science. "We rule Nature," said Francis Bacon, "by

obeying her," but if Nature's laws admitted unforeseen exceptions due to prayer, or to the rescue of good people, the progress of science and its consequent benefits would be impossible. Our Lord saw an evidence of divine love, not of divine indifference to unrighteousness, in God's making His sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and in His sending His rain upon the just and the unjust, and we shall not be unscientific if we do the same. Science teaches us that the only way to escape suffering in the natural sphere is by learning Nature's laws and by obeying them. "Ignorance," said Bishop Butler, "is a lower form of vice," and so even saints may suffer, not for their saintliness, but for their ignorance.

V.

Modern Science has made another contribution to the solution of the problem of suffering. It stresses the *solidarity of the human race*: that, as St. Paul said, "We are all members one of another; and if one member suffer all the members suffer with it; and if one member rejoice, all the members rejoice with it." We cannot, in many relations in life, much as we might desire it, be treated as individuals, simply because we are not purely individuals. We are links

in a chain. We are linked in three ways: We are linked to all our contemporaries; we are linked to all our predecessors; we are linked to posterity. We suffer because of our relation to our predecessors and to our contemporaries, and they suffer from their relation to us. On the other hand, as in the case of the uniformity of natural laws, the benefits derived are much greater than the disadvantages. If it were not so, human progress would be impossible. If humanity were an aggregate of isolated individuals, there could be no human progress; if on the other hand the disadvantages of solidarity were greater than the advantages, we should have retrogression and not progress. That the advantage exceeded the disadvantage seems to have been recognised in the Old Testament. In the Second Commandment, it is said that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, but that He shews mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love Him. I believe that to be the correct translation. When Shakespeare wrote:

"*The evil that men do lives after them,*
The good is oft interred with their bones,"

he was much too pessimistic. The effect of

good lives and good deeds is much more enduring than that of evil ones.

VI.

Another contribution that modern scientific thought has made to the solution of the problem of suffering is found in the theory of evolution. Older thinkers took the view that creation was completed ages ago. The account of the Creation in *Genesis,* as in *Paradise Lost,* taught it. In estimating the creative process, we need to bear it in mind that creation is not finished. "Children and fools," it is said, "should not see things half done." In our present stage we see suffering and observe how it operates, but there is no good reason for believing that it will always be as it is now. The Theory of Evolution is a Gospel of Hope. The Wise Man was not wise when he said: "That which hath been shall be: there is no new thing under the sun." The Seer of the *Revelation* is in accord with the modern doctrine of emergent evolution, when he writes: "He that sat on the Throne said: 'Behold, I make all things new'." And so the Seer does not behold humanity as ever accompanied in its pilgrimage by sin, suffering and death. He envisages a future state in which "there shall be

no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." St. Paul also, inspired by Christian faith, shares the same conviction, when he writes in my text: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." That glory is realised when men become actually, what they are now potentially, sons of God. And St. Paul pictures the whole creation with outstretched neck looking forward to this consummation of the creative process.

VII.

The contribution which modern scientific thought makes to the solution of the problem of suffering is a helpful one. It does not solve the problem, but it gives us reasonable hope. It suggests that there is much more to be learnt about it, and that to judge by the progress already made, the necessary knowledge will yet be gained. It supports that profound reflection of Shakespeare:

"There is some soul of goodness in things evil
Would men observingly distil it out."

This, I hope, is not to "patch grief with

proverbs." Suffering is a terrible thing, and every time we witness it in its incurable forms we ask: Why does God permit such suffering? Is it because He will not prevent it? or is it because He cannot prevent it? Personally I believe that the Creator in entering into the process of creation has voluntarily limited Himself in order to accomplish it. When the creative process is completed the Divine self-limitation will cease to exist. That, I think, is what St. Paul means in *I. Cor., xv.*, 25f.

> *"For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all."*

What is the practical conclusion? It seems to me to be threefold.

(1) When in the presence of suffering strive to hold fast to faith in the love and wisdom of God. Our modern knowledge does not prohibit the comfort contained in such words as these "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." "What I do, thou

knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

(2) We believe that God is slowly eliminating suffering from the creative process. Let us strive to be "fellow-workers with God." Let us on the one hand do nothing to increase needlessly the sufferings of our fellow-men and those of the brute creation. Let us on the other hand co-operate, where we can, with all those noble efforts of modern humanitarianism to reduce the suffering of the world.

(3) Be ready, if necessary, to suffer vicariously, and, if possible, in the spirit of Christ, the Captain of our Salvation, "made perfect through sufferings" (*Hebrews ii.*: 11), but whose vicarious sufferings formed but a portion of the suffering needful to redeem mankind. Hence we have St. Paul writing to the Colossians: "I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up on my part that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ" (I.: 24). Not, of course, the sufferings needful for the perfecting of our Lord, but His vicarious sufferings needful for the salvation of men.

THREE GOSPELS OF LIFE

Sermon preached
in Christchurch Cathedral,
Canterbury, N.Z.,
on the 12*th May*, 1929.

THREE GOSPELS OF LIFE

"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price."

—Isaiah lv., 1.

THERE are three gospels to which I wish to direct your attention. These are not the gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, but three messages of life, of good news about life, good news for those who have to live. The first is the gospel of Work and Wages. The good news that there is work to be done and good wages to be earned by doing it. It is a gospel which appeals to a commercial age. Its great text is: "Nothing for nothing and very little for sixpence." It says to each one of us: "If you want anything, be it food, shelter, clothing, comfort; or be it wealth, honour, rank, you must pay for it. If you have no money, then you must work for it." Some of us who belong to the past generation were brought up to read the books of Dr. Samuel Smiles,

especially his book, *Self-Help*. Dr. Smiles was a great preacher of this gospel of work and wages. He is for ever telling us, until we are almost tired of hearing it, of those who scorned delights and lived laborious days. He tells us how they got up early and worked late. How they thought nothing of trouble, nothing of ease, nothing of pleasure.

"The heights by great men gained and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they while their companions slept,
Were toiling upwards in the night."

—They got their reward: years passed, riches, honour, rank, even fame came to each of them in the end. This gospel of work and wages, of toil and thrift; this gospel of *quid pro quo*, is very needful for all of us to learn and obey, and it is well for us, whoever we are, to learn it early. It speaks to the scholar as did Euclid to the Egyptian prince. "There is no royal road to learning": it speaks even to the genius in the words of Edison, the American inventor: "Genius is 10 per cent. inspiration, and 90 per cent. perspiration": it speaks to every young fellow in the words of the Hebrew sage: "Seest thou a man diligent in his busi-

ness, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men," therefore "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

Some deny this and declare that this gospel of work and wages is no gospel at all, but a sentence to hard labour for life! All I would say of those who speak thus is that they are fools for their pains.

Work not only provides a man with his daily bread; it not only assists health and self-respect; it is a man's chief educator and character-builder.

The second gospel is that of Duty and Honour. In answer to the question: What is the chief aim of man? Is it to get rich? Is it to secure comfort and pleasure? It cries, No—the chief end of man is to do his duty: everything else is secondary. If you do not do your duty you will be miserable; if you do not do your duty you will despise yourself. Remember that you are a moral being: it is this which distinguishes you from the animals. You possess a conscience, your conscience voices the call of duty. In obedience to that call your true human life is found.

The great text of this gospel is Nelson's signal: "England expects that every man this day will do his duty." Its great example

is that of the Roman sentinel at the gate of Pompeii, who stood unmoved at his post, and died there while the panic-stricken crowd of slaves and citizens rushed past him to safety. We hear this gospel chanted by the great English poets in divers tones; perhaps there is none who sings it more delightfully than the cavalier poet Lovelace to his Lucasta—

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more."—

Some of you may have come across it in a poem of a very different kind, called the *Beatific Vision*. A monk had prayed for years that he might in this life have a sight of Christ in Glory. One day, praying in his cell—the Vision comes to him, but at the same moment the bell rings which summons him to distribute food to the poor at the monastery's gate. He tears himself away and goes to the task to which duty calls. The poem concludes with the words—

"Do thy duty, that is best,
Leave unto thy Lord the rest."

—If the gospel of work and wages has made Britain rich, it is the gospel of duty and honour which has made Britain noble. There are some, it may be men of large

means and great social position, or men of so fine a spirit that with them self-interest is of no account—to whom the gospel of work and wages makes little appeal. These are won by the gospel of duty and honour:

"Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts in glad surprise
To higher levels rise:
The tidal wave of deeper souls,
Into our inmost being rolls
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares."

—It has been the salvation of the British Empire that, so far, the bulk of the leisured classes have given heed to the call of the gospel of duty and honour, and though not compelled to work for wages, have been ready to work hard and remittingly in response to the call of duty, and have given themselves freely to various forms of public and philanthropic service because duty demanded that they should. These men and women think not of acquisition, but of achievement. All that is best in the public services and in the private life of the wealthier classes in Britain is due to their response to this gospel.

But besides the gospel of work and wages, and the gospel of duty and honour, there is another gospel. It is the Gospel of the Grace and Goodness of God. It has nothing to do with work and wages; it is not dependent on duty done and the possession of a good conscience; it is a gospel of God's giving not as the reward of merit, but as inspired by love. The Psalmist chants this gospel in Psalm 127. "It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early and so late take rest, for God giveth to His beloved while they are sleeping." That is the correct translation and not "God giveth to His beloved sleep." The Hebrew prophet in the invitation which forms my text also proclaims this Gospel of the Grace and Goodness of God: 'Ho! everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat: yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." The Seer of the Book of the *Revelation* proclaims it also: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." This Gospel of the Grace and Goodness of God runs through all our Lord's teaching. You will recall it for in-

stance in His lesson from the lilies of the field. How true is this of our experience of life, whether we be young or old. How much joy and blessing is there in life which we have not earned: how much which we could not earn: which we have not deserved and do not deserve that is freely given to us by God. And all God desires is that we should receive these blessings—blessings of health, blessings of joy, blessings of intelligence, blessings of faith, and hope, and love —with thankfulness and use them dutifully. A Scotch professor used to urge his pupils to "cultivate an attitude of reverential dependence upon the Supreme Source of all good." It is more simply and beautifully expressed in the words of the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing; He feedeth me in green pastures and leadeth me forth beside the waters of comfort." Those who study our English poet, Wordsworth, find the same gospel in his writings—God the gracious giver of every good and perfect gift, combined with the exhortation that the right attitude of man in the presence of such goodness is a spirit of humble and thankful receptiveness. You remember how the poet recommends "a wise passiveness"

and condemns those who think "that nothing of itself will come, but we must still be seeking." That is not only the spirit in which we should come to the Holy Communion and to every religious service, but it is the spirit in which we should approach all the great experiences of life. George Herbert, the country parson of that little church of Bemerton, near Salisbury, puts it all into four lines:

> *"Thou art coming to a King;*
> *Large petitions with thee bring,*
> *For His grace and power are such,*
> *Thou canst never ask too much."*

And so this Gospel of the Goodness and Grace of God bids us come to God as Naaman the leper came to Israel's prophet to receive cleansing; to come to God as the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon to receive wisdom; to come to God as Hezekiah came to Zion's altar to receive strength and courage. It calls aloud to each one of us: Come then and receive Divine Forgiveness; come then and receive Divine Fellowship; come then and receive Eternal Life. "Ho! everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat."

By some that invitation is accepted early; by others it is accepted late. It was so in the case of that toil-worn adventurer and much enduring prisoner, Sir Walter Raleigh. His acceptance of the invitation of the gospel of the Grace and Goodness of God is contained in what I think is one of the most beautiful of his poems, as it was his last, written on the night before his execution:

"Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to lean upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage,
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage
Over the silver mountains
Where spring the nectar fountains
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill,
My soul will be a-dry before,
But, after, it will thirst no more."

These, then, are the three Gospels of Life to which I wished to direct your attention—the Gospel of Work and Wages, the Gospel of Duty and Honour, the Gospel of the Grace and Goodness of God, and my point

is this, that we cannot do without any one of the three. When I look out to-day on life it seems to me that many of our troubles are due to people obeying one of these gospels and neglecting the other two. Many of our traders and industrialists insist on the sufficiency for salvation of the first gospel. If only the Gospel of Work and Wages were obeyed, all would be well. Yet what a hard and sordid life would be ours if this were the case.

Our idealists insist on the sole sufficiency of the Gospel of Duty and Honour, but, alas! they have very little experience of human nature and of the actual and necessary conditions of human life who think this Gospel is of itself sufficient in all cases.

Our religious people who know what religious experience is and what religion can do in life, think that the Gospel of the Grace and Goodness of God is sufficient to save mankind—but it is not. Neither gospel is sufficient by itself. We need all three. The first gospel demands obedience from us in our work: the second gospel demands obedience from us in our leisure; the third gospel demands obedience from us in our religion. The first gospel teaches us the duty of every man to his employer or to him with

whom he has business relations; the second gospel teaches us the duty of every man to his neighbour, especially to those who are in any way dependent upon his good services; the third gospel teaches every man his duty towards God—the spirit of reverence, faith, receptivity, humility and thankfulness with which we should wait upon God. Now I am persuaded that if we will only strive to be governed by these three gospels, or, rather, by this threefold gospel of life, that we shall find that we are being enabled so to pass through things temporal as not to lose the things eternal.

A GOODLY HERITAGE

A Sermon preached in Takapuna Church
on the 7th July, 1929,
on the occasion of the Public Thanksgiving
for the recovery of H.M. King George V.

A GOODLY HERITAGE

"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

—PSALM xvi.: 6.

TO-DAY we celebrate with thanksgiving the restoration to health of our Most Gracious Sovereign Lord, King George. We are deeply thankful that his noble career of public service has not ended: we rejoice that one who is so well-beloved, and deservedly well-beloved, by his people, may look forward to further useful and happy years on the throne of his ancestors.

Our Sovereign is for us the centre of Imperial unity, but he is also the supreme head and representative of our British civilisation throughout the world. He is the symbol not only of British rights, but of those British ideals and methods which have created our British civilisation.

You and I do not sit on thrones, but we share in a very full measure in the blessings of our British civilisation. The lines are

fallen unto us in pleasant places: yea, we have a goodly heritage. We do well on an occasion of this kind to think about it. "Think and Thank" is a good motto. We are all apt to take our civilisation too much for granted, even those of us, perhaps, who cannot forget how nearly that civilisation was wrecked in the Great War. Others, because of some obvious defects in our civilisation, which no small efforts are being made to remedy, talk as though it were rotten to the core, a mass of decadence and demoralisation, and feel that we need the drastic remedies of a Lenin or a Mussolini, if we are to be saved from perdition. People who talk like that know very little of human history, or even of British social, economic, and political conditions in the past. Civilisation has never conferred so many blessings on humanity as to-day, and of all civilisations in the world, the British civilisation may fairly claim to be the best, if not of the small states, yet certainly of the great ones.

Every civilisation has certain dominant ideals: that of Greece was beauty; that of Rome was law and order; that of Israel was devotion to its God; that of China was reverence for the past. The ideal of present-day American civilisation is said to be ac-

celeration. Undoubtedly the dominant characteristic of our British civilisation is freedom: the protection of the rights of the individual against those who would usurp them. English history in one of its aspects is a long fight for freedom—freedom from the tyranny of kings, freedom from the tyranny of nobles, freedom from the tyranny of popes, freedom from the tyranny of bishops, freedom from the tyranny of landowners, freedom from the tyranny of employers, freedom from the tyranny of labour unions, and probably our next fight will be for freedom from the tyranny of bureaucrats. Fights for freedom to choose where we will live and work; fights for freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, freedom to hold our own religious convictions and to worship God in our own way; freedom of publication; freedom to choose our career, and so on. And all the while there has been the recurring fight for freedom against foreign foes—a long fight for freedom extending over nigh a thousand years.

Another notable characteristic of our British civilisation is purity in the administration of justice. Judge Gascoigne, of Plantagenet times, stands forth in our his-

tory as the great example of the fearless courage of the judge; Francis Bacon is pilloried as the corrupt and disgraced magistrate. To this judicial uncorruptness is united an active and vigilant campaign to detect and punish crime, combined with enlightened efforts to reform the criminal.

Another characteristic of our civilisation is the spirit of humanity which permeates it—its eagerness to relieve suffering. Our hospitals, our orphanages, infirmaries, charitable relief organisations, testify to this.

There are many other characteristics of our civilisation, but the three chief are our regard for personal freedom; purity in the administration of justice; humanitarianism —a growing sense of the duty of helping the sick and suffering, the poor and helpless among our people. These are the greatest treasures in the goodly heritage of our British civilisation.

But a civilisation has not only *characteristics*, it has also *foundations*, and we do well to pay serious attention to them.

The most obvious foundation of a civilisation is its *material* foundation. It is seen in our houses and wharves, our roads and railways, our buildings and sewers, our telephones and telegraphs, our radio masts

and electric power works, our motor-cars and aeroplanes, our farms and factories, our lighting and machinery. This material foundation of civilisation is so obvious that people think of it as the whole of civilisation and judge the quality of a civilisation simply and solely by it. This is a great mistake.

The second foundation of civilisation is *intellectual*. All the visible wonders of our modern civilisation first have their existence in the minds of its creators. Minds secure knowledge and accumulate it. That knowledge is preserved in vast libraries and also in the oral tradition of the arts and crafts of every trade and profession. This intellectual, but often unrecognised foundation of civilisation is much more precious than its material foundation. If some fearful disaster destroyed the material foundation of our civilisation, within a generation or two it could all be reconstructed, and much of it on better lines, but if the cataclysm also destroyed the intellectual foundations—the accumulated knowledge — on which our civilisation is built, it would take centuries before our civilisation could be restored.

The third foundation of civilisation is like the second invisible; it is *moral* and *spiritual*. This foundation lies not only deeper

than the material foundation, but deeper even than the intellectual foundation. It is that which gives to a civilisation its peculiar and distinctive quality. It is very closely connected with the nation's religion. A Scotch professor has defined religion as "the inside of civilisation." That is a true description of one aspect of religion. The dominant characteristics of our British civilisation are not material and intellectual, but moral and spiritual, the product of the moral and spiritual foundation of our civilisation. It is not generally realised how indispensable this foundation is. Without it a civilisation rapidly falls into decay and disruption. That is why certain civilisations in the past have been so short lived. They had good enough material and intellectual foundations, but were weak morally and spiritually. When an ancient Hebrew prophet predicts the downfall of Assyria, or Babylon, or Tyre, it is because the moral and spiritual basis of their civilisation is sapped. When the prophet declares that "fulness of bread" destroyed Sodom, he is saying that no matter how flourishing your material foundations are, if you have weak moral foundations, your civilisation will collapse. The British race has been, and, I think, still is, a deeply

religious race in a very simple and sincere way. We owe much of the quality of our civilisation to this fact. It is told of Burns that very early one fine morning he and a friend climbed to the top of Arthur's Seat and saw the sun rise over one of the most lovely scenes in the Scottish Lowlands. His friend exclaimed upon the beauty of the landscape: Burns said that he was more moved by the thought of the noble characters and tender hearts of those who dwelt there. Such people as the poet depicted in "The Cotter's Saturday Night." The quality of a nation's civilisation is the quality of the nation's soul.

In the ancient world, when the foundation-stone of a city or great building was being laid, it was the custom, especially, I think, in a region liable to earthquakes, to sacrifice a human victim and to lay the foundation stone on his body. You will remember that when Hiel, the Bethelite, rebuilt the walls of Jericho, he sacrificed in this manner his eldest son and his youngest son. Now this is a symbol of the way in which a civilisation is built: it is built on sacrifice; the continuous sacrifice of many generations of human beings. We are very conscious today of the horrors and evils of war, but at

any rate in the case of defensive wars, war is consecrated by the self-sacrifice of those who die to defend their hearths and homes —the civilisation of their race. Again we are very conscious to-day of the evils of capitalism, but we do well to remember that capital which is necessary to the building up of a civilisation (and to the borrowing of which we in New Zealand owe not a little of the rapid growth of our civilisation) is the product of the self-sacrifice of many who by hard work, and thrift, and self-denial, have accumulated it. The lazy, the extravagant, the self-indulgent, are never capital creators.

Thus has the goodly heritage of our British civilisation been built. You and I enjoy its countless advantages, but are we doing anything to build it up? Are we giving more to it than we are getting out of it? Are we parisites or citizens? These are serious questions. Many of us cannot do much, we cannot be statesmen and scientists, captains of industry and merchant princes, educationists and poets, architects and publicists, but all of us can do something to build and maintain our heritage. All who do their daily work honestly: all who bring up their children decently: all who save money from pleasure and self-indulgence and invest it

wisely: all who support philanthropic, educational, social, and religious institutions: all who promote those things which are just, pure, noble, lovely, and of good report, are doing something to build our civilisation.

Our Fathers in a wondrous age,
Ere yet the world was small,
Ensured to us a heritage,
And doubted not at all
That we the children of their heart
Which then did beat so high,
In later time should play like part
For our posterity.
Youth's passion, manhood's fierce intent,
With age's judgment wise,
They spent, and counted not they spent,
At daily sacrifice.
Wherefore through them is Freedom sure;
Wherefore through them we stand,
From all but sloth and pride secure,
In a delightsome land.
Dear-bought and clear, a thousand year,
Our fathers' title runs;
Make we likewise their sacrifice,
*Defrauding not our sons.**

As we think of our civilisation we perhaps ask ourselves: Can it last? A book written

* From Rudyard Kipling's *Heritage.*

after the War by a German named Spengler and which has had a great circulation, predicts the downfall of Western civilisation. Spengler sees in our civilisation all the marks of decadence and demoralization. I wonder if he is right? I do not see why he should be. It does not follow because all past civilisations have decayed and collapsed, that therefore this fate must befall all civilisations, including our own, in the future.

Scripture presents us with two types of civilisation. We see them both depicted side by side in the Revelation of St. John the Divine. The one is Babylon: the type of a civilisation based on force and fraud, existing simply for self-glorification and self-gratification. It loves not virtue: it knows not God: it worships the Beast—itself: it exists to exploit and enslave mankind. It becomes mighty: it flourishes for a season. Then the crash comes, and the cry goes up: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!"

The other type of civilisation is depicted as the New Jerusalem. This is the symbol of the Kingdom of God. Into it there enters "nothing that defileth or maketh a lie." The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. Through its midst flows the River of the Water of Life, by its stream

grows the Tree of Life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. In the streets of the city are neither death, sorrow, nor crying. God dwells in its midst, and He is its perpetual light. This is a picture of the permanent type of civilisation built upon the true knowledge of God, built also on the sure foundation of service and sacrifice.

"The kingdoms of the Earth go by
In purple and in gold;
They rise, they flourish, and they die,
And all their tale is told.
One Kingdom only is divine,
One banner triumphs still,
Its King a servant, and its sign
A gibbet on a hill."

SIX GOLDEN SAYINGS

A Sermon preached in the Chapel of Wanganui College, N.Z., on 21*st April*, 1929.

SIX GOLDEN SAYINGS

"Apples of gold in baskets of silver."

—PROVERBS XXV., 11.

WHAT are these apples of gold in baskets of silver? They are things fitly spoken: the sayings of the wise.

George Herbert, the Seventeenth Century religious poet, said:—

"A text may hit him whom a sermon flys."

By *flys*, he means *misses*. I have found that people remember texts better than they remember sermons, so as I may only speak to you once, I intend to-night to have six shots at you. I am going to repeat to you six sayings. They are not taken from the Bible, because, although the most weighty sayings on the most important matters are to be found there, I should probably have chosen sayings that you already know, whereas like a good teacher I should like to teach you what you do not know. I feel sure that at least four of the six sayings will be new to you, and two of them, I fear, will be rather

hard to understand. What I want you to do, however, is to try and remember the six sayings; you will find more and more meaning in them as you turn them over and over in your mind. I have selected these sayings, because they have been of great help to me in thinking about the deep things of life—its problems and mysteries.

I.

My first saying is from St. Augustine; not the Augustine who converted Kent, but the great theologian, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa who died in 430 A.D., and of whom the Spaniards say: "As no dish is perfect without garlic, so no sermon is perfect without a citation from St. Augustine." St. Augustine's golden saying is found in the first chapter of his wonderful volume of *Confessions*, which I hope many of you may read. It runs thus:

> *O Lord, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless till it rest in Thee.*

There you have the explanation of all religion, that God has made us for Himself. It is, as St. Paul said to the wise men of Athens, because we are His offspring, and

in Him we live and move and have our being, that we are moved to seek after Him, if haply we may find Him, "though," as St. Paul adds, "He be not far from every one of us." A thought which our own poet, Lord Tennyson, has expressed in a very beautiful verse:

Speak to Him, thou, for He heareth,
And Spirit with Spirit can speak.
Closer is He than breathing,
Nearer than hands and feet.

We all of us desire many things—money, pleasure, ease, success, in various forms, which of us knows that he needs God most of all, and that in communion with Him we receive strength, calm, joy?

We need to give proper satisfaction to this heartfelt craving for God. Many who have it, do not recognize that they have it. They think the craving is for something else, and when they have got that something else, they are still unsatisfied. What they need is communion with God, "in knowledge of Whom," as our Prayer Book Collect says, "standeth our eternal life," *quem nôsse est vivere.* Much of the restlessness of the modern world is due to this craving for

God being either ignored or perverted, to the great loss of those who do it.

St. Augustine's experience,

> *O Lord, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, till it rest in Thee—*

it may interest us to remember, was shared by a very different person, Bobbie Burns, as this verse of his shows:—

"When ranting round in pleasure's ring
Religion may be blinded,
Or if she give a random sting,
It may be little minded.
But when at last, you're tempest driven,
And life is but a canker,
To have communion fixt with heaven
Is sure a noble anchor.

II.

My second golden saying was uttered by Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, who was the tutor of Alexander the Great. The Greek world spoke of Aristotle as "the master of them that know." Here it is:

> *The true nature of anything is that which it is when its becoming is completed.*

This means that only when a thing is finished can you judge rightly of it. Now this saying is so important because to-day all educated people believe in evolution: they believe that we are in a universe which is not completed, but is in process of creation. We are in a universe which is becoming. Now people naturally form opinions about the Universe, and offer judgments upon it, and many of them judge without remembering this saying of Aristotle, and so they constantly judge wrong. They judge things by their *origins*. For instance, these foolish people judge man by his brute ancestry, whereas they should judge man by what he is becoming. If he were only a brute, he would have remained a brute. It is what man is becoming that is the really significant thing about him. So when you judge be cautious and patient: examine the trend of the process, then lift up your eyes to the far horizon, and there you will see man not as the crouching figure of an anthropoid ape, but in the noble form of the Son of God.

Bear it in mind then:

The true nature of a thing is that which it is when its becoming is completed.

And remember, if you can, that this means

that the past is not the measure of the future, and that the past has no absolute authority over the present. Every judgment should be open to revision in the light of our growing experience. Aristotle's saying is a hard one to grasp, but it is worth remembering.

III.

My third golden saying is from Tertullian, a famous Christian writer, a barrister, who flourished about 200 A.D. To him we owe the fine thought that the human soul is naturally Christian—*anima humana naturaliter Christiana*, but that is not the golden saying I have selected. It is this:—

> *Christ called Himself the Truth; He did not call Himself Tradition.*

All that this saying means, just like Aristotle's, you will not grasp either easily or quickly. Now *Tradition* is something which is handed down from the past; but *Truth* is ever present reality. Tradition can grow out-of-date, but the Truth never can. But the point I wish you to remember especially is this: If Christ be the Truth, then nothing which is true can be unChristian, and equally nothing which is untrue can be Christian. You sometimes hear people say: "O, that

may be true, but it is not Christian." That is nonsense, or else it is blasphemy, since Christ declared Himself to be the Truth. People, too, often think of the Christian Religion as consisting in holding fast a tradition. It should be an awe-inspiring apprehension of Eternal Truth. That, indeed, is no easy matter, as Lowell, the greatest of America's poets, has emphasized:

> *"New occasions teach new duties,*
> *Time makes ancient good uncouth,*
> *They must upward still and onward*
> *Who would keep abreast of Truth."*

Yet, hard as it is, this is the duty of those who are the followers of Him who called Himself the Truth.

IV.

My fourth golden saying was spoken by a fine English teacher, Dr. Illingworth, whom I had, as a young man, the privilege of staying with once in his Berkshire rectory —the house in which the author of *Lorna Doone* was born. The saying runs thus:—

> *The Christian Religion refuses to be proved first and practised afterwards. Its practice and its proof go hand in hand.*

Many people hold that they must be convinced by argument that the Christian Reli-

gion is true, before they will try to become Christians. This golden saying states that they are going the wrong way about it. It is not reading books of Christian evidences that will make you a convinced Christian, but leading the Christian life. Christian faith and Christian practice go hand in hand. Thus does Christ become our Master.

"For meek obedience that is faith,
And following that is finding Him."

A Greek philosopher, Plotinus, put it very briefly thus: *"If any man would know God, he must become God-like."*

Hence a bad life can kill the knowledge of God in us.

It is told of Polycarp, the aged Bishop of Smyrna, who was martyred in 155 A.D., that the Roman pro-consul at his trial asked him, after he had confessed himself a Christian: "Who is this God of the Christians?" Polycarp replied: "If thou art worthy, thou shalt know."

V.

My fifth golden saying is this:

Sow a thought, and you reap an act;
Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.

I do not know the author of the saying. Its lesson is that of the Latin maxim: *Obsta principiis;* oppose beginnings, check the thing at the outset. Beware of little sins: hesitate to take the first steps which will lead you down the easy road to perdition.

"He that once sins, like him that slides on ice,
Goes quickly down the slippery ways of vice,
Though conscience check him, yet its rubs once o'er,
He slides on smoothly and looks back no more."

That statement is much too exaggerated. "No one becomes a scoundrel all at once," says the Latin poet. The grace of God recalls us many times: conscience does not soon cease to protest; but remember the Recording Angel does not sit up in heaven and note down our sins in a great book. The Recording Angel is within us and the record is made in our own nature, and what that nature becomes settles our fate, even as Milton wrote:—

He that has light within his own clear breast
May walk i' the centre and enjoy sweet day.
But he that hides a dark mind and foul thoughts,

Benighted walks beneath the mid-day sun,
Himself in his own dungeon.

VI.

My sixth golden saying is from Tennyson.

"There are more things wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."

It is no doubt very familiar to you. A scientific training seems clearly to teach us that there were things which our forefathers felt they could rightly pray for, which we cannot pray for with a good conscience. This golden saying bids us not to give up the habit of prayer. There are in manufactures direct products and by-products, and sometimes these by-products turn out to have quite astonishing values. St. Paul said: "In *everything* by prayer and thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God," and he did not add all your requests shall be granted. No, he added, that the result would be this: "The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds." Would you call that a by-product? Hold fast to prayer, because by it you hold fast to God. And remember this, that as there are certain things which it seems God cannot give us, except we work

for them; so also there are other things which it seems God cannot give us, except we pray for them. Experience in prayer will teach you what those gifts are.

> *"Men grow inly like that they kneel before."*

Those, then, are my six golden sayings. It is a solemn thing to speak with the dying, and so the preacher has been exhorted to speak as a dying man to dying men. I feel it to be an even more serious thing to address those who have life before them, which they can so easily make a poor, mean, foul thing, instead of a blessing both to themselves and others.

THE CHRISTIAN MODERNIST

A Sermon preached in
St. Mary's Cathedral, Auckland, N.Z., on
St. Matthias' Day, 1929.

THE CHRISTIAN MODERNIST

"Every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

—St. Matthew xiii.: 52.

IN his latest volume Dean Inge has a paper headed "Labels and Libels." All labels are something of libels, especially when attached to a body of men or a set of opinions. Labels in such cases are like caricatures, they seize upon some striking feature and exaggerate it, and so produce an effect which is either hideous or humorous, or both. This is true of the label *Modernist.* It might be assumed from his label that the Modernist in religion is like the Athenian in *Acts* concerned only to hear or to tell some new thing. This would, however, be a very superficial and one-sided view of Modernism. For the Modernist the old has its value as well as the new, and he is concerned to adjust the old to the new, and to weld both into a unity. This welding of the ancient

good and the new truth is no easy matter. It demands a courageous handling of the ancient good, and the rejection from it of that which in the light of our fuller knowledge is seen to be untrue. This undertaking rouses enormous opposition in an institutional religion, where the ancient good is regarded in all its parts as entirely true and absolutely fundamental. And so the operation which should be carried out with scientific precision in an atmosphere of light and calm, has to be performed amid dust and heat, and is hindered by numberless interruptions, lamentations, and execrations. Whilst his aim is to save the life of religion and to extend its influence and usefulness, the Modernist is accused of being its murderer. This is seen, for instance, in Father Ronald Knox's limerick, entitled "The Modernist's Prayer":

O Lord, forasmuch as without Thee
We are not able to doubt Thee,
Help us all by Thy grace
To teach the whole race
They know nothing whatever about Thee.

Now the Modernist would never trouble himself to attempt his difficult task, if he did not possess three convictions:—

(1) That Religion is a permanent and es-

sential element in human nature. Auguste Sabatier said: "Mankind is incurably religious." The Modernist is convinced that just as man is a cooking animal, a tool-using animal, a political animal, a talking animal, so he is a religious animal. Man's religion is subject to change, but there seems to be no prospect of its being eliminated from human life. Man is as naturally religious as he is rational, moral, and aesthetic. Science may alter the nature of man's religious convictions, but it will not deprive him of religion. Our modern studies have increased rather than diminished for us the importance of the part that religion plays in personal life and in social life. Where a religion becomes decadent, unless it be replaced by a more vital religion, the morality of the community suffers, as also its creative power.

(2) The second conviction of the Modernist is that the Christian Religion is the highest and most beneficial form of religion. It constitutes the highest point of religious evolution; and it is of such a character as to be capable of quite indefinite progress, expansion, and adaptation.

When the Modernist speaks of the Christion Religion, he is thinking of it in the

very simple and fundamental form in which it appears in the teaching of Jesus Christ, in, for instance, the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, the Two Great Commandments, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and other portions of the Gospels: he is thinking of it as embodied in its supreme doctrine that the Divine Nature is essentially love, and that love in its various forms (as, for instance, we have it presented by St. Paul in his great hymn of love in *I. Corinthians xiii.*) is the supreme Christian duty. This high valuation of the Christian Religion by the Modernist does not lead him to think little of the other great religions of mankind: he recognizes the large elements of truth in them and the great services that they have performed for humanity. The reason why the Christian Religion is not universal the Modernist believes to be due to its misrepresentation and corruption. All that is needed to impress humanity with its merits is that the Christian Religion should be true to itself, for as one of the early Fathers of the Church observed, "the human soul is naturally Christian."

(3) The third conviction of the Modernist is that the Christian Church is needful

for the extension, permanence, and full influence of the Christian Religion in the world. But the Christian Church, to fulfil its ideal, needs a constant spirit of self-effacing loyalty to Christ. The spirit of the Modernist Churchman is expressed in the words of Charles Wesley:

Forth from the midst of Babel brought;
Parties and sects I cast behind:
Enlarged my heart, and freed my thought,
Where'er the latent truth I find,
The latent truth with joy to own,
And bow to Jesu's Name alone.

The Church, so the Modernist believes, has no moral and spiritual authority to demand for full membership more than the teaching of our Lord demands. Herein the Modernist differs from the Reformation position of the Church of England. That position is clearly set forth in Article VI.

> *"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein or may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite and necessary to salvation."*

The Modernist would simply demand as essential what Christ demanded. This would enable many men and women of good will and high intelligence to become whole-hearted members of the Church, who at present are excluded from its active membership by their inability to accept the many later dogmatic and ecclesiastical requirements which various Christian Churches demand from their members.

The Modernist holds that not only does loyalty to Christ demand this policy from the Church, but that it is also demanded by the requirements of modern scientific research. There are very many things which Christians in the past have believed to be true which in the light of modern science and modern historical criticism are quite incredible to those who are really acquainted with their operations. I do not wish on this occasion to deal with these incredible things or even to name them—for each should be dealt with at some length and the evidence for and against it impartially stated, before the verdict of incredibility be pronounced upon it. This has been done elsewhere.

The point to realise is this, that the Modernist, if he has declared these things to be incredible, has also declared them to be non-

essential. That, if we do not believe them, we are not the less Christian, since they do not really touch the essence of the Christian life or lower its standard of faith and duty. The Modernist believes in the Christian Religion and in the Christian Church, but he does not believe in them in the form in which he sees them in the modern world. He sees the Church by schisms rent asunder; he sees the Christian Religion mixed up with and united to superstitions of all kinds.

The word superstition may be misunderstood. I hasten to explain it. The word *superstition* is derived from a Latin word which means a *survival*. A superstition is something which survives and which ought not to survive: something which is kept alive by artificial means, or because it is a *parasite* preying upon something, which gives it a vitality which if it were separated from its victim, would lead to its rapid decease. In the Christian Religion of to-day these superstitions are survivals from the beliefs and practices of more primitive religions—Semitic, Roman Pagan, native Keltic, and Teutonic, which the Christian Religion has replaced, but by which it has been influenced. These sub-Christian superstitions are equally condemned at the bar of moral and spiri-

tual religion as they are at the bar of science and reason. Studdert Kennedy, the well-known army chaplain, was keenly conscious of these superstitions in contemporary Christianity when he wrote:—

> *"It is awful to realise that when one stands up to preach Christ the soldier feels that you are defending a whole ruck of obsolete theories and antiquated muddles."*

According to a well-known economic law, bad money drives out good, and so does superstition drive out true religion, and when that occurs, you have your community split into opposing camps, the one secularist and the other superstitious, and then as a great French writer asks: "Between an unenlightened religion and a brutal secularism, O soul pure and poetic, where shall thy place be?" Plainly with neither party. Yet this is the situation which exists to-day in many so-called Christian countries. It is this which the Modernist desires to remedy. He treads the middle way between Superstition and Secularism, and he is convinced that if the Christian Religion is to regain its influence in the Western world, it must, among other reforms, purge itself of its supersti-

tions. And this, indeed, is as necessary if it is to become the religion of the highly intelligent peoples of Japan, China, and India. The elimination of superstition would be equally influential for good in healing the many schisms among Christians. It is mainly the superstitions in Christianity which divide it, most of them deriving their strength from the mother-superstition that the Scriptures are inerrant in all particulars, and are to be interpreted literally—a superstition which the Christian Religion derived from Jewish Rabbinism.

People do not realise to-day that the Christian world is in the midst of a second Reformation. The first Reformation was mainly produced, apart from the abuses of the mediaeval Church system, by a great revival of learning and a great extension in men's outlook, and also by a fresh study of primitive Christianity. "At the Renaissance," it was said "Greece rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand." It is similar causes which are producing the second Reformation. The bitter intolerance with which the first Reformation was opposed, combined with the obstinate refusal to receive the new truth, was mainly responsible for the rending of Christendom. We

may hope that our Church leaders have learnt the lessons of the first Reformation and that we shall avoid many of its mistakes as we proceed with the second. Modernism is mainly an *educational* movement, and it desires to proceed by educational means. It wishes to strengthen greatly the teaching function of the Church, especially by producing in the first place a ministry sufficiently highly educated to be able to cope with the immense intellectual difficulties of the present religious situation. There is no use in trying with bows and arrows to silence the fire of machine-guns. The Modernist movement appeals primarily to the educated and intelligent layman of every class. It has a mission to him and a message for him, and it looks to him for understanding and support.

The text of my sermon sets forth the duty of the Modernist teacher. There is, however, another text which is full of significance for him. It is that notable passage in the Fourth Gospel which declares the future unveiling of the truth to be given by the operation of the Spirit of Truth. Jesus is represented as saying to His disciples that His Gospel is not complete.

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth."

These words set forth both the spiritual and the progressive character of Christ's Religion. The Modernist does not believe that this progress will lead men away from Christ, but that it will bring out more fully and clearly much that was implicit in His teaching, and will unveil to mankind many fresh applications of His principles. Hence for the Modernist the supreme religious authority is not a sacred book, still less is it a body of dogmatic formularies, but the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of Truth, Love, and Freedom. It is that Spirit which in times of difficulty and doubt must be our supreme guide.

One whisper of the Holy Ghost
Outweighs for me a thousand tomes,
And I must heed that private word,
Not Plato's, Swedenborg's, or Rome's.

Of course, this Spirit of Christ may be ignorantly, rashly, and impudently claimed for the most grotesque views and the most

egregious practices, as a Seventeenth Century English satirist points out:

For saints may do the same things by
The Spirit in sincerity,
As other men are tempted to,
And at the Devil's instance do.

We have, however, a sure test for such claims—that of conduct and character. "By their fruits ye shall know them," said Christ.

There is but one point more that I must touch upon in connection with Modernism. The Modernist feels great difficulty about the present use of the creeds. This is partly due to the fact that they affirm as historic facts certain things which he does not believe are historic facts, and also because there are a number of important facts of Christian faith and morals which they do not affirm. Some Modernists desire a large freedom to interpret in a very wide sense the statements in the traditional creeds; but I find that the younger Modernists demand modern creeds which may be used in all respects as alternatives to the old creeds. I conclude with such a Modernist Creed. It is one which, I believe, all Modernists accept, and it has, moreover, what will appear to

many to be a great advantage in that it is expressed in the words of that ancient Churchman, whom we speak of as St. John. It runs thus:

We believe that God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

We believe that God is Light, and that if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

We believe that God is Love, and that everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.

We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

We believe that we are children of God, and that He hath given us of His Spirit.

We believe that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

We believe that the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but that he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Amen.

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